

Xie
Qi*Disorder of Yeast*

Exhibition in Lucerne: 1.12.2021. – 19.2.2022

Opening: Wednesday, December 1, 5:30-7:30 pm

“In this object, simultaneously intense and partial, insistent although accidental, in this contradictory objet, we must understand the fragile moment of a disfiguration that nonetheless teaches us what figuration is.”

—Georges Didi-Huberman, *Devant l'image*

Galerie Urs Meile is pleased to announce Xie Qi's first solo exhibition *Disorder of Yeast* in our gallery in Lucerne. Opening on December 1, 2021, the show will present powerful works on canvas dating back to 2019.

The body and portraits have long been important motifs in Xie Qi's painting, appearing throughout her various creative periods. Drawing on a sweeping imagination and rich perceptions, Xie Qi bestows on these shifting figures the warmth of emotion, the tension of desire, and tones of gloom. She sources her subjects of depiction from friends, everyday objects (portrait-bearing banknotes, plants resembling human organs), candid photographs and classic themes, capturing and depicting them in an approach akin to “psychological profiling”—the artist refines the components of the image through observation and perception, adding or removing details, destroying and reconstituting whole forms, restoring the figure to magnify parts and moments filled with dramatic tension. Xie Qi's depiction takes place between recollection and creation. The concealed brushstrokes, blurred boundaries and phantom colors of the pictures often radiate with a mysterious air from a past time.

Disorder of Yeast - the title of the show - conveys a faint sense of warmth brought about by the fermentation of grains, making one imagine that the sake brewed with strict temperature has spilled out of control due to the chaotic yeast reaction. The sensation caused by this process easily evokes an emotional and erotic imbalance, which slowly vibrates and flows through the artworks on the winter days in which the exhibition is held. This exhibition is also a look back on the recent creative trajectory of Xie Qi, and a concentrated presentation of her bold experimentation and breakthroughs in recent years. The exhibition presentation continues along the artist's past creative thread, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the artist's unique individual style and painting language. In such works as *Green* (2019), *Soft Ball* (2020), *Clock* (2019) and *Shades of Red* (2019), the artist has employed her trademark gloomy, hazy color transitions, a method for concealing the brushstrokes that fills the painting with a sense of a chromatic shroud, the soft edges of the forms concealed within provocative lighting. In an entirely new series of works from 2021, the artist has intentionally inserted harder edges and more rigid color fields into the picture, a subtle shift that is most clearly embodied in the works *Density of Green* (2021) and *Wrinkles from Summer* (2021). In *Daydream* (2021), *Mosquito Song* (2021), and *A Riddle* (2021), Xie Qi has entered into a state of push and pull between abstraction and figuration, as the figure details of the picture fade into lighting formed from the coalescence of color. Within this push and pull, these objects with their still faintly discernible outlines present a liquid or vaporous flow. These real bodies and faces drift amidst the picture, like phantom illusions. By depicting pure flesh, Xie Qi's creations have given shape to humanity's seemingly empty spirit and undercurrents of desire, and her painting has come to bind the shattered resonance between the vulgar and divine.

Text by Liya Han

Xie Qi (* 1974) was born in Chongqing, and currently lives and works in Beijing, China. Her recent solo exhibitions include: *The Summer Heat Has Been Gone For Years*, Galerie Urs Meile, Beijing-Lucerne, Beijing, China (2021); *Clavicle*, BANK Gallery, Shanghai, China (2019); *The Unbearable Weight of Things*, Pekin Fine

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Arts, Hong Kong, China (2016); *Displacement*, Dawan Art, Paris, France (2016). Recent group shows include: *Silent Theater* Dual exhibition, HdM Gallery, Beijing, China (2021); *DISFRUTA*, BANK×Objective, Shanghai, China (2021); *Clean*, SPURS Gallery, Beijing, China (2020); *Casting Votes*, CLC Gallery, Beijing, China (2020); *Sleeping with a Vengeance, Dreaming of a Life*, Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart, Germany (2019); *Extended Ground*, Galerie Urs Meile, Beijing-Lucerne, Lucerne, Switzerland (2017); *A Separation*, Gallery Yang, Beijing, China (2017); *The Latch*, C-Space + Local, Beijing, China (2017); *Chinese Whispers*, Kunstmuseum Bern, Bern, Switzerland (2016).